DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 428 508 EF 005 226

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TITLE	Instructional Space Review Form and Information on Changes to State Building Aid.
INSTITUTION	New York State Education Dept., Albany. Office of Facilities Planning.
PUB DATE	1998-12-00
NOTE	18p.
AVAILABLE FROM	State Education Department, University of the State of New York, Office of Facilities Planning, Room 1060, Education Building Annex, Albany, NY 12234. Tel: 518-474-3906; Fax: 518-486-5918; Web site: http://www.nysed.gov/fmis/facplan/
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Accessibility (For Disabled); Classrooms; Elementary Secondary Education; Incentives; Public Schools; Records (Forms); *School Construction; *State Aid
IDENTIFIERS	Application Forms; *New York; *Regulatory Programs

ABSTRACT

The New York Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) has created a new 3-page blank form to be completed for all school district capital projects involving the construction of new special education space. The new form requires the signatures of the Superintendent of Schools, the District Superintendent, and the VESID Special Education Regional Associate certifying they have conferred about the project's anticipated effect on special education instructional space. The new form is included here along with information on changes to State Building Aid concerning a new increased state building aid incentive, a new regional cost factor that allows a greater portion of the capital project to be aidable, comparative data on aidable portion of capital project, and annual state and local shares of building projected costs over 15 years between old and new incentives. (GR)

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December 1998

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
School Board Presidents

FROM: Rita D. Levay, Manager, Special Education Policy and Quality Assurance

Charles A. Szuberla, Coordinator, Facilities, Management and Information Services

SUBJECT: Instructional Space Review Form and Information on Changes to State Building Aid

In the past, the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) has used a form entitled, "Regional Associate Building Project Review" for all school district capital projects that involved the construction of new special education space. We have developed a new form entitled, "Instructional Space Review." A copy is attached for your information.

The new form includes some important modifications and procedures for processing this form have been changed. The new form will be sent to the school district by the Office of Facilities Planning whenever a capital project is established which is expected to involve the construction of **any new instructional space**. It is up to the district to initially advise the Office of Facilities Planning at the earliest possible time that the district intends to pursue a capital construction project.

The school district is responsible for completing the form and submitting it to the Office of Facilities Planning prior to a local referendum concerning the project. This should be done as part of the preliminary submission. The new form requires that the Superintendent of Schools, the District Superintendent and the VESID Special Education Regional Associate sign the certification on the last page of the form indicating that they have conferred about the project's anticipated effect on special education instructional space. The Department's approval of any such capital project is clearly dependent upon the project being consistent with and supportive of the Special Education Space Requirements Plan for the region.

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Also attached is important information on changes to State Building Aid. The building aid incentive and the new regional cost allowance, combined with the construction of elementary level special education classrooms, can have a significant effect on the local cost of school building projects. Please share this information with school districts in your region.

We believe that the use of this new form will expedite the program review and the determination of capacity for capital projects involving new instructional space. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions about the new Instructional Space Review Form or the State Building Aid information, please contact either the Office of Facilities Planning at (518) 474-3906 or the appropriate VESID special education regional office (see attached list).

Attachments

INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE REVIEW

Note: **This form is to be completed for all capital projects involving the creation of new instructional space, whether through new construction or renovations, and submitted as part of the district's preliminary approval documentation.**

School District:	
Building Name & Address:	
Project Control #:	– – – – – –
Project Manager, Facilities Planning:	Phone: (518) 474-3906
District Contact Person/Telephone:	

To be completed by SED Special Education Regional Associate (RA):			
Special Education Regional Associate:		**Date Received by RA:**	

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School District _____ Building Name _____

Project Number - - - - - - -

1) How many students currently in separate site placements, identified for placement in integrated settings in the region's Special Education Space Requirements Plan, will be redirected to integrated placements as a result of this project? How many classrooms are being constructed in this project for this purpose?

2) Indicate the number of rooms dedicated to special education services which will be located in this building when the project is completed:

Type of Classroom (Teacher/Student Ratio)	Total # of Special Education Rooms	# Within Proposed Construction of New Space	# Within Proposed Use of Existing Building	Grade Level*
15:1	_____	_____	_____	_____
12:1+1	_____	_____	_____	_____
8:1+1	_____	_____	_____	_____
6:1+1	_____	_____	_____	_____
12:1+4	_____	_____	_____	_____
Preschool	_____	_____	_____	_____
Resource Room	_____	_____	_____	_____
Related Services	_____	_____	_____	_____
Office	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (District)	_____	_____	_____	_____

*Please use letter "E" for elementary, "M" for middle school, "S" for secondary.

FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES ONLY

Minimum Guidelines for Special Education Room Sizes:

15:1	770 sq. ft.	Resource Room	300 sq. ft.
12:1+1	770 sq. ft.	Preschool	50 sq. ft./child or 60 sq. ft. per child for classrooms serving children who are nonambulatory).
8:1+1	550 sq. ft.		
6:1+1	450 sq. ft.		
12:1+4	900 sq. ft.		

3) Does this project provide special education space located in age-appropriate areas and integrated within the school? ❒ Yes ❒ No If no, explain.

Certification by Superintendent of Schools, District Superintendent and Special Education Regional Associate

Project Control Number: - - - - - -

Name of School District: _____

Name of Building: _____

The Superintendent of Schools has conferred with the District Superintendent and the Special Education Regional Associate, and they agree that the proposed project is consistent with: (1) the continual allocation of appropriate space within the district for special education programs; (2) the district's long-range plan for educational facilities; and (3) the District Superintendent's approved five-year Special Education Space Requirements Plan.

Name of Superintendent (print or type): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of District Superintendent (print or type): _____

❒ Approved ❒ Disapproved

If disapproved, explain reason(s): _____

_____

_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Special Education Regional Associate (print or type): _____

❒ Approved ❒ Disapproved

If disapproved, explain reason(s): _____

_____

_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

VESID SPECIAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE

Dr. Rebecca Cort, Statewide Coordinator (718) 722-4544
Daniel H. Johnson, Upstate Regional Coordinator (518) 473-1185
Dale Oken, New York City Regional Coordinator (718) 722-4544

WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE

NYS Education Department
VESID Special Education Quality Assurance
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(914) 245-2952 (fax)

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(516) 884-8540 (fax)

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NEW CHANGES TO STATE BUILDING AID

There have been important changes to State Building Aid. The State Building Aid Incentive, the new regional cost allowance factor and cost allowance for construction of elementary special education classrooms, can have a dramatic effect on the local cost of school building projects.

11/98

New Increased State Building Aid Incentive

❖ The examples below demonstrate the effect of the new **State Building Aid Incentive** on the local share of construction costs, and how districts can leverage additional dollars for projects with the same local cost.

Scenario 1 - Old Law
(Typical School District with a 70% Building Aid Ratio)

The average school district building aid ratio is 70 percent of approved expenses. (The building aid ratio varies from 0 percent to 95 percent and is based on the district's property wealth.)

State Building Aid Ratio: 70%						
Amount Financed	Interest	Amortization Period	Payments Per Year	Annual Debt Service	State Share	Local Share[1]
$10 million	5%	15 years	2	$955,553	$668,887	$286,666

Scenario 2 - New Increased State Building Aid Incentive
(Reduced Local Share)
New Legislation Effective July 1, 1998

The average school district will see its building aid ratio raised from 70 percent to 80 percent of approved expenses for projects approved by the voters on or after July 1, 1998. In addition, even the wealthiest districts who previously received no building aid will now be eligible for aid.

State Building Aid Ratio: 80%						
Amount Financed	Interest	Amortization Period	Payments Per Year	Annual Debt Service	State Share	Local Share[1]
$10 million	5%	15 years	2	$955,553	$764,442	$191,111

NOTE: *There is a 33 percent reduction in local share with the new increased State building aid incentive.*

[1] Assumes all expenses are aidable within the approved cost allowance

Scenario 3 - Leveraging Additional Dollars with the Same Local Effort New Legislation Effective July 1, 1998

The average school district will see its building aid ratio raised from 70 percent to 80 percent of approved expenses for projects approved by the voters on or after July 1, 1998.

State Building Aid Ratio: 70%						
Amount Financed	Interest	Amortization Period	Payments Per Year	Annual Debt Service	State Share	Local Share[1]
$10 million	5%	15 years	2	$955,553	$668,887	$286,666

State Building Aid Ratio: 80%						
Amount Financed	Interest	Amortization Period	Payments Per Year	Annual Debt Service	State Share	Local Share[1]
$15 million	5%	15 years	2	$1,433,329	$1,146,663	$286,666

As demonstrated above, this school district's local share for a $15 million project under the new law is the same as their share for a $10 million project under the old law.

NOTE: *A school with a former building aid ratio of 70 percent will see its local share drop from 30 percent to 20 percent which, when financed at $15 million, will allow the district to have a 50 percent increase in the total cost of the project for the same local effort.*

[1] Assumes all expenses are aidable within the approved cost allowance

New Regional Cost Factor

❖ The new **Regional Cost Factor** allows a greater portion of the capital project to be aidable. This is further enhanced with the construction of special education classrooms.

Scenario 1 - Old Law

1) Assume a building project for a new 520-student school (justified by enrollment projections).
   - 3 sections each grade for a total of 21 classrooms
   - average class size – 24.8

2) Each child requires roughly 110 square feet of space.
   - includes corridors, cafetorium, library and ancillary spaces

3) School size of 57,200 square feet.

4) School construction costs about $125 per square foot.

5) The total cost of the school is **$7,150,000**

6) The rated capacity is 21 classrooms x 27 students = 567.

7) The estimated cost index is $8,774 per unit of rated capacity based on the latest figures – July 1998.

8) The maximum cost allowance is **567 x $8,774 = $4,974,858**
   - construction exceeds maximum cost allowance
   - district receives no aid on **$2,175,142**
   - new buildings and additions typically exceed the maximum cost allowance

Scenario 2 - With the New Regional Cost Factor

1) The regional cost factor for Genesee County is 1.1004

2) The maximum cost allowance is **567 x $8,774 x 1.1004 = $5,474,334**
   - district receives no aid on **$1,675,666**

NOTE: *With the application of the regional cost factor, the amount aidable on this project increased by almost $500,000.*

Scenario 3 - With Flementary Special Education Classrooms and the New Regional Cost Factor

1) Same as above with the addition of 6 elementary special education classrooms
   - with a capacity of 12 students
   - 770 square feet + 195 square feet of ancillary space required
   - assume an additional 150 square feet for corridor, etc.

2) Building size is 57,200 square feet + 6,690 square feet = 63,890 square feet.

3) The total cost of the school is $7,986,250.

4) The maximum cost allowance for the elementary special education rooms is:
   (12 x 6 x $27,420 x 1.1004) = **$2,172,454**[2].

5) The maximum cost allowance for the project is $5,474,334 + $2,172,454 = $7,646,788
   - district receives no aid on $339,462

NOTE: With the addition of six elementary special education classrooms, the total cost of the school construction increased by $836,250. However, only $339,462 of the project is not aidable as compared to $2,175,142 which was not aidable in Scenario 1.

NOTE: This building aid and cost allowance information would also apply for the construction of elementary special education classrooms in the district used for BOCES special education programs.

[2] For grades 7-12, there is no fiscal advantage to building special education classrooms as opposed to general education classrooms.

BUILDING AID CALCULATOR FOR COMPARING ALTERNATIVES

	Project Amount	Amount Eligible for Building Aid	Building Aid Ratio	Interest Rate	Amortization Period	Payments Per Year	Annual Debt Service	Annual State Share	Annual Local Share
Old Law: no incentives, no special education rooms	$7,150,000	$4,974,858	70%	5%	15	2	$683,220	$332,762	$350,458
New incentive	$7,150,000	$4,974,858	80%	5%	15	2	$683,220	$380,299	$302,921
New incentive + regional cost factor	$7,150,000	$5,474,334	80%	5%	15	2	$683,220	$418,481	$264,739
New incentive + regional cost factor + elementary special education rooms	$7,986,250	$7,646,788	80%	5%	15	2	$763,128	$584,553	$178,576

NOTE: *With the application of the new 10 percent State Building Aid Incentive, the new regional cost factor and the construction of elementary special education classrooms, the annual local share is 50 percent less than with the old law even with the $836,250 increase in the project amount.*

For information on State Building Aid for your school construction project, contact the Office of Facilities Planning project manager for your district at (518) 474-3906.

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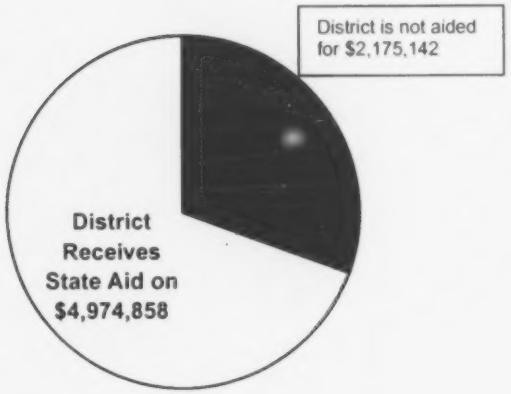
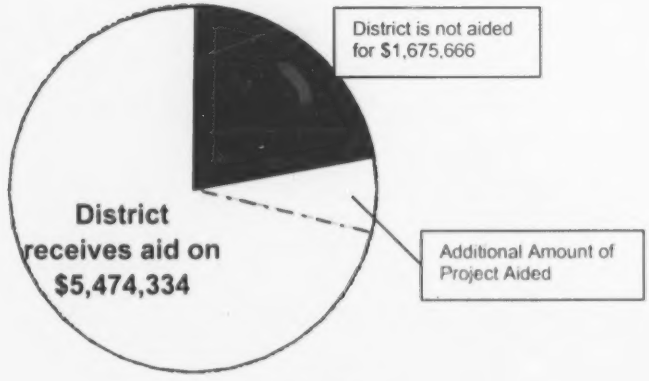
COMPARISON OF AIDABLE PORTION OF CAPITAL PROJECT

Scenario 1
(Old Law)



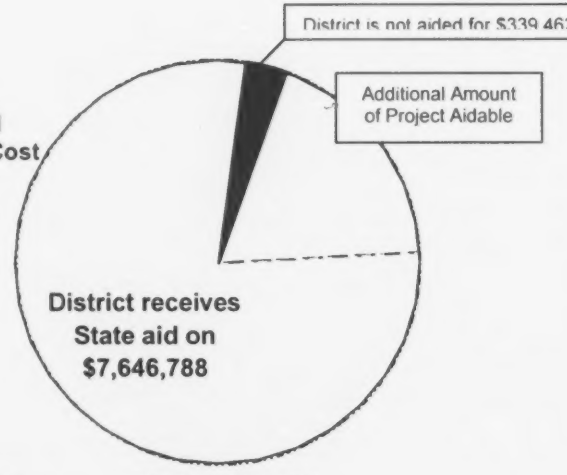
Total Project Cost
$7,150,000

Scenario 2 - With New Regional Cost Factor



Total Project Cost
$7,150,000

Scenario 3 - With Elementary Special Education Class and New Regional Cost Factor



Total Project Cost
$7,986,250

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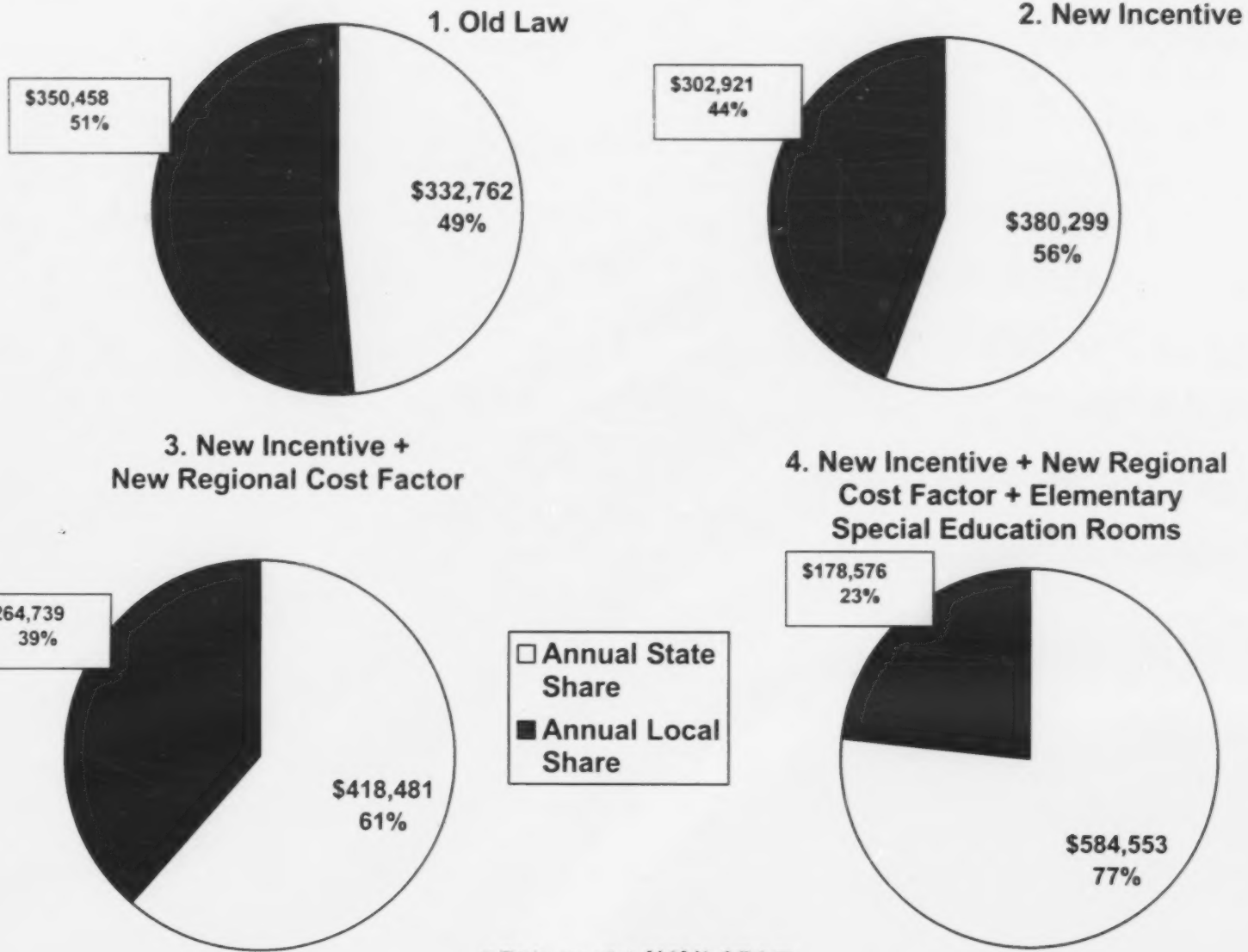
Annual State and Local Share for Projected Costs of Building Project Over 15 Years



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